

MH Diversity Council

The Mental Health Diversity Council focuses on diversity-related issues pertinent to staff and patients. The Council reports to the MH Executive Group. Membership includes at least one member of each of five main disciplines (nursing, psychiatry, psychology, social work, and clerical), plus trainees and staff members of other disciplines based on interest. All members are appointed by the Service Line Director.

Council Charge:

1. Identify and develop plans to address issues related to diversity, culture and individual differences as they pertain to the delivery of care in the service line and the professional development of staff. The focus can include recruitment and retention of a diverse staff as well as developing and facilitating methods for improving the education, training and professional development of staff with regard to knowledge and sensitivity to issues of diversity
2. Proactively identify potential areas of vulnerability/gaps (if any) for the MH service line in areas of diversity and cultural sensitivity. Develop and help implement strategies to address areas of potential vulnerability/gaps.
3. Serve as a resource to the service line and the mental health executive group to help solve issues related to diversity, culture and individual differences on a consultative basis.

Council Membership:

- Daniel Corvin (Social Work)
- Janis Johnson (Occupational Therapy)
- Julia Perry (Psychology) – Chair
- Angela Sherburne (Psychology)
- Jane Spain (Nursing)
- Ren Stinson (Psychology)
- Jeanne Topping (Clerical)
- Karen Wahmanholm (Psychiatry)

Council Activities:

- Participating in diversity-related seminars and sharing applicable information
- Identifying, collecting, and sharing diversity-related resources
- Fostering discussions about diversity-related topics
- Providing consultation about diversity-related topics
- Leading and/or arranging educational opportunities (Psychiatry Grand Rounds presentations, Lunch & Learn discussions, etc.)
- Supporting and promoting diversity involvement

Affiliated Groups:

- Diversity Advisory Committee (DAC): A facility-wide committee for VA employees, some of whom are also veterans. Chair: Michelle Maloney (EEO Specialist)
- Transgender Consultation Team (TCT): A multidisciplinary team that serves as a resource for VA facilities throughout VISN 23. Contact: Brent Walden (Staff Psychologist)

Selected Resources:

Age and Generational Influences:

- The American Association of Retired Persons (www.aarp.org) *
- National Family Caregivers Association (www.nfcacares.org) *

Disability:

- Mouth Magazine (<http://mouthmag.com/>) *
- Able (<http://ablenews.com>) *
- American Association of People with Disabilities (www.aapd-dc.org) *

Ethnic and Racial Identity:

- The Biracial Family Network (www.bfnchicago.org) *
- Association of Multiethnic Americans (www.ameasite.org) *

Sexual Orientation:

- The Advocate (www.advocate.com) *
- The National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce (www.thetaskforce.org) *
- Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (<http://www.pflag.org>) *

Books:

- Bieschke, K. J., Perez, R. M., & DeBord, K. A. (Eds.). (2007). Handbook of counseling and psychotherapy with lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender clients (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Carter, R. T. (1995). The influence of race and racial identity in psychotherapy: Toward a racially inclusive model. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Fouad, N. A., & Arredondo, P. (2006). Becoming culturally oriented: Practical advice for psychologists and educators. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Hays, P. A. (2008). Addressing cultural complexities in practice; Assessment, diagnosis, and therapy (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Hays, P. A., & Iwamasa, G. Y. (2006). Culturally responsive cognitive-behavioral therapy: Assessment, practice, and supervision. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2003). Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice (4th ed.). New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Additional Online Resources:

- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Multicultural Action Center Resources
www.nami.org/multicultural *
- Psychological Treatment of Ethnic Minority Populations
http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/programs/empa_ptemp.pdf *